TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE Transcriber's Office FLOOR DEBATE

May 25, 2005 LB 577

SENATOR STUHR: Yes.

SENATOR RAIKES: We funded special ed...and I don't want to get too far off the topic, but the two are tied together. We funded a 5 percent increase in special ed in the first year of the biennium, 3 percent in the second year of the biennium. And in each of those years...it amazes me how fast this gets away from me, but I think it was \$1.7 million to fund new grant programs. So this is a significant increase in grant programs, given that the current amount of programs...or, the current programs cost about \$2 million. So we are, in this budget biennium, going to increase the number of grant programs at a cost of about \$1.7 million per year, or \$3.3 million or \$3.4 million total. In the first year of the out-biennium, you would have the additional cost, besides that \$1.7 million, of the inclusion of eligible four-year-olds in the aid formula. That, I'm thinking, is about \$2.3 million. So the total additional cost, counting the grant program and the aid formula in the first year of the out-biennium, would be about \$4 million per year. I think it remains, if I'm thinking about it correctly, about the same in the following year. Or it may go up some if there's some additional kids that are eligible to go But the important point is that with the in the aid formula. grant program, the state is only providing, at most, half the money. Because half of the money has to come from the local community, or Head Start, or those other programs. The second The second important point is that because the grant program is the gatekeeper, the Legislature has a very good handle, or throttle, on how fast this program expands.

SENATOR STUHR: Okay. Thank you. About how many children...do you have any idea...we're talking about, presently, 28 programs, is that correct,...

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.

SENATOR STUHR: ...across the state?

SENATOR RAIKES: Yes.